

For the Examiner's convenience, a complete listing of the claims is provided below.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An encapsulation device for the repair of an articular cartilage defect, the device comprising:

a body having a generally annular frame supporting therein a solid shell-like cover portion for disposition adjacent a bone in an area of the cartilage defect;

an elongated leg structure comprising a plurality of elongated leg members, each extending from a distal side of said body for disposition in the bone in the area of the cartilage defect, said leg members each having a length which is a plurality of magnitudes greater than a thickness of said body, and being of a generally conical configuration along substantially the length thereof;

said annular frame comprising a peripheral frame portion, and said cover portion being integral with said frame portion and disposed within said frame and of a configuration bowed proximally to always provide a bowed proximal end profile for engagement by a complementary-shaped tool head, and adapted to maintain that profile during engagement of said body with the tool head; and

each of said leg members being provided with a central channel therein, each of the channels opening on a proximal side of said frame and extending substantially the length of each of said leg members to a point proximate a closed distal end thereof of said leg member;

wherein at least one of said leg members is provided at a distal end thereof with an end portion enlarged beyond a periphery of said leg member at a proximal end of the end portion and a generally crested end portion at a distal end of the end portion.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein each of said leg member end portions comprises a circumferential protrusion thereon for gripping the bone.

4-8 (Cancelled).

9. (Previously Presented) The device in accordance with claim 1 wherein said peripheral frame portion bounds said cover portion.

10-15 (Cancelled).

16. (Original) The encapsulation device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the device is of a selected one of (i) bioabsorbable material and (ii) bioremodelable material.

17. (Original) The encapsulation device in accordance with claim 1 wherein the device is impregnated with cell growth material.

18-19 (Cancelled).

20. (Currently amended) A method for effecting a repair to an articular cartilage defect, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an encapsulation device comprising a body for disposition adjacent a bone in an area of the cartilage defect, and an elongated leg structure comprising a plurality of elongated leg members extending from the body for disposition in the bone in the area of the cartilage defect, the elongated leg structure comprising legs each provided with a central channel therein, the channel being open on a proximal side of the frame member and extending substantially the length of each of the leg members to a point proximate a closed distal end thereof;

the body comprising a peripheral circular frame portion and a solid shell-like cover portion fixed within the frame portion and of a configuration bowed proximally therefrom to provide a bowed proximal surface, such that a central portion of the cover portion always extends proximally further than a peripheral portion of the cover portion;

producing an elongated hole in the bone for each leg of the encapsulation device leg structure;

receiving a distal end of an insertion tool within the central channels of each of the leg members; and

driving each leg of the leg structure of the encapsulation device into the hole provided therefore in the bone to bring a distal surface of the bowed encapsulation device body into adjacency with the bone.